

In the specification:

Please substitute the following paragraphs for the paragraphs at the indicated locations in the specification as originally filed or most recently amended.

Page 11, line 1+:

It is considered important to the robustness, flexibility and economy of the invention that frequency multiplexing is not relied upon at any point in the upstream communications link. The upstream link provides a time slot for each cable drop and implemented from the directional coupler 14 with a frequency-based code to identify the individual cable drops in a simple manner which will now be explained. The time slot duration is not particularly critical to the practice of the invention but a one-second time slot per cable drop is considered to provide convenience, good operating margins in the context of existing and commercially available circuits and substantial flexibility of implementation with acceptably frequent polling of the cable drops.

Page 12, line 17+:

It should be appreciated that while the invention is described in terms of the preferred implementation utilizing commercially available hardware and circuitry, any tone-coded arrangement is suitable for the practice of the invention. It is only necessary to provide and discriminate a number (e.g. ten) of tones in a short sequence to provide a unique coded identification for each subscriber. This can be easily accomplished at low bandwidth (compatible with a low frequency carrier signal alluded to above) by many different circuit designs which will be apparent to those skilled in the art.